

to our country will not be forgotten. Mr. Speaker, Petty Officer Kenneth Aaron Smith was a great American who exemplified the true meaning of patriotism. I ask you to join me in honoring the memory of this truly exceptional young man.

**TRIBUTE TO RICH WELLS, VICE
PRESIDENT AND SITE DIRECTOR
OF MICHIGAN OPERATIONS FOR
THE DOW CHEMICAL COMPANY**

HON. JOHN R. MOOLENAAR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. MOOLENAAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Rich Wells, Vice President and Site Director of Michigan Operations for The Dow Chemical Company, in recognition of his service and his many contributions to the Great Lakes Bay Region as he begins the next step of his journey as the Vice President of Texas Operations.

An influential member of the community, Rich originally moved to Midland to work for Dow after he graduated from the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. During his illustrious 34-year career, Rich has gone on to serve in several leadership roles within The Dow Chemical Company. Before his selection as the Vice President and Site Director of Michigan Operations, Rich served as the Vice President for Global Government Affairs and Public Policy.

During his tenure as Vice President and Site Director of Michigan Operations, Rich has benefitted the community in a variety of ways. He founded the Fast Start program, which has equipped in demand employees with the skills they need to be successful. He also has volunteered and advocated for local organizations serving those in need, chairing Midland County's United Way Campaign in 2016.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Michigan, I am honored today to recognize Rich Wells for his service to The Dow Chemical Company and his contributions to the Great Lakes Bay Region.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, on September 13, 2017, I missed a series of Roll Call votes. Had I been present, I would have voted: YEA on Roll Call votes 486, 487, 488, 489, 492, 493, 497, 498, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, and 515. I would have voted NAY on Roll Call votes 490, 491, 494, 495, 496, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, and 514.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, on September 14, I was unavoidably detained off

the House floor and was not present for Roll Call 528, the vote on final passage of H.R. 3354. Had I been present, I would have voted "No." As our nation comes together to help those affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, I am saddened that members of Congress were not given the opportunity to come together to provide all of the people of our country the support they need to meet the many challenges they face and to invest in their future. This eight bill spending package was considered under a restrictive process that severely limited the ability of members to influence the bill. I could not in good conscience vote for this bill because it is based on the devastating House Republican budget, meaning that it underfunds and makes significant cuts to many of my constituents' key priorities such as job training, education, fixing our crumbling infrastructure, economic development, Pell Grants, housing affordability, after-school programs, and law enforcement. It attacks women's health by cutting family planning and Teen Pregnancy Prevention Grants and defunding Planned Parenthood, and it includes many poison pill policy riders that will undermine the Affordable Care Act, undo many important Dodd-Frank Wall Street reforms, and prevent the EPA from keeping our air and water clean. As the Ranking Member of the Homeland Security Subcommittee, I find it inexplicable that as we work to recover from Hurricanes Harvey and Irma and see new storms on the horizon, the bill slashes funding for programs that build resilience and can be used for prevention and recovery and it weakens efforts to understand and address climate change, a driving factor of more frequent and severe storms. I repeatedly tried to shift funding in the bill for immigration enforcement activities to more pressing homeland security needs, but I was rebuffed on party line votes. Instead of this short-sighted bill that would be disastrous for all Americans, I call on Republicans to join Democrats to enact spending bills that grow the economy, create jobs, and truly keep our nation secure.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND
HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES
AND UNIVERSITIES GRANTS**

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to state my excitement that Democrats and Republicans were able to come together to add two million dollars to the Historic Preservation Fund grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the FY18 appropriations bill passed on the House floor today.

Last year, Congress appropriated \$4 million for grants to Historically Black Colleges and Universities under the National Park Service Historic Preservation Fund. Unfortunately, this year President Trump's FY18 budget eliminated all funding for this program. I was glad to see that both Democrats and Republicans strongly disagreed with President Trump's misguided cut, and ultimately decided to increase the total funding of HBCU grants to \$5 million for FY18.

My district, the 7th Congressional District of Alabama, is well-known as the Civil Rights

District. The State of Alabama is also home to fifteen Historically Black Colleges and Universities, the most in the country. These important grants will provide assistance to repair and restore historic buildings on our HBCU campuses. Our HBCUs are rich with history that deserves to be preserved for future generations, and I can think of no better institution than our Nation's storytellers, the National Park Service, to do the job. Moreover, this funding will help revitalize our HBCU campuses, and help stimulate economic revitalization in their communities.

Again, I would like to thank Chairman CALVERT and Ranking Member MCCOLLUM for working with me in the past, as well as Assistant Leader CLYBURN for offering an Amendment to increase HBCU Grant funding by \$2 million. This is an important program for our HBCUs, and I will continue to work across the aisle to ensure that these funds are protected in the final FY18 budget.

HONORING BEN WILLIAMS

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, jazz artist Ben Williams will be honored this year by the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation at the Jazz Forum and Concert during the 47th Annual Legislative Conference. Mr. Williams, an internationally renowned bassist and composer, will also perform his Protest Anthology at the concert, which will take place on Thursday, September 21, 2017, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, in Washington, D.C. Mr. Williams will receive the 2017 CBCF ALC Jazz Innovator Award for his highly creative and multi-faceted contributions to jazz and world culture.

I am very proud to have known this very talented artist for many years. I am also pleased to share the following details of his impressive career as they appear in his biography.

Ben's mother used to work in my Capitol Hill office. When she took Ben, an energetic and curious six-year-old, into the office on his school break, a watchful eye was in order. One afternoon, while rambling around my personal office, Ben discovered a huge object that instantly captured his imagination. The shiny upright bass was like nothing the kid had ever seen. He tapped on it. He popped a string. He climbed up on it. "What is this thing?" he wondered.

Twenty years later, Ben Williams is still surprised at that chance meeting.

"Its low frequency attracted me," Williams recalls, "the way the instrument felt when I touched it. Then later, just the feeling of playing a groove. When you play a bass the whole instrument vibrates. It almost feels like the spirit of another human being. It's like dancing with somebody and being in full contact with them. And the sound of the instrument appealed to me. It's warm and deep and it resonated with me."

On the eve of his first CD, State of Art, Ben Williams had become one of the most sought after bassists in the world, his resume a who's who of jazz wisdom: Wynton Marsalis, Herbie Hancock, Pat Metheny, Terence Blanchard, Christian McBride Big Band, Nicholas Payton,